

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**UPGRADEABLE TIMESTAMP MECHANISM**

5 A method, computer program product, and data
processing system for generating and validating an
upgradeable digital timestamp of a document is disclosed.
The digital timestamp includes a hash value, a current
time, and a digital signature. Over time, as computer
10 and cryptanalytic technology progresses, upgrade
timestamps are applied to the document that take
advantage of more advanced, more difficult to break hash
functions or digital signature schemes. These upgrade
timestamps are applied preventatively at a point in time
15 just prior to the timestamp's being able to be
compromised.